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Court Weighs Trying Nixon In Wiretaps

U. S. District Judge John Lewis Smith Jr. took under advisement yesterday legal arguments on whether former President Richard Nixon, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and numerous other high-ranking Nixon administration aides must stand trial for alleged illegal wiretapping of newsmen and government officials.

Justice Department attorneys argued that the taps, installed as part of a government program to stop alleged leaks of classified information to the press, were a legal exercise of the President's power to protect the national security.

Attorneys for Morton Halperin, a former National Security Council aide whose home telephone was tapped for 21 months as part of the program, claim the tap was illegal because it was used for political purposes.

During the last 2½ years, the suit filed by Halperin has produced new details of the Nixon administration wiretapping program as well as general FBI handling of national security wiretaps.

Halperin's attorneys are asking $2 million in damages.